

THE HAND
OF GOD

and

Other Poems



The Hand

of

God

and Other Poems

By

W. A. SEAWELL

Preface by Paul Neff Garber, Bishop of the Raleigh Area, The Methodist Church

VANTAGE PRESS

New York Washington Hollywood

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Published by Vantage Press, Inc. 120 West 31st Street, New York 1, N.Y.

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To

My Beloved Wife

CLAUDIA

AND

My Precious Children

SHARON

KATHY

BILLY

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# PREFACE

The Reverend W. A. Seawell has rendered a great service to thousands through his pastoral ministry. His personal concern for each member and for all non-members has been an outstanding feature of his most fruitful ministry. Mr. Seawell is recognized as one of the most outstanding

preachers of North Carolina.

Mr. Seawell has not only made his contribution through his pulpit and personal ministry but he has the rare ability of presenting the Christian message through poetry. He has written many poems, but the most helpful has been his poem: "The Hand of God." He has given to us his basic theology in this beautiful and helpful poem which tells of how God touched his own life. This poem, "The Hand of God," in my estimation is one of the most valuable of modern religious poems. I hope that many persons may have the privilege of reading this and the other poems given to us by Mr. Seawell in this book of poems.

Paul Neff Garber, Bishop of the Raleigh Area The Methodist Church

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# THE HAND OF GOD

and

Other Poems



#### THE HAND OF GOD

Long ago I found myself in a state of deep despair; I wandered aimlessly, I was going, but I knew not where; When my soul seemed to have reached a new and desperate state.

I saw His Hand, I heard His Voice say, "Come before it's too late."

I felt the tender touch, the strength of God's Holy Hand; New strength surged through my soul and I could stand. The darkness that had veiled my soul vanished and I could see;

I knew not why, but I was glad that God's Hand lifted mel

My life shall be spent in unselfish service to my loving Lord, Striving to witness for Him that others might know Him in sweet accord.

His love, His saving grace, are available to all wayward and sinful man;

Oh, won't you hear His voice, won't you take His tender Holy Hand?

The days are bright and filled with countless blessings untold, And I realized now how much I had missed in days of old. My heart rejoices, my fears are gone, and I am not afraid to stand,

For my soul has felt, my soul knows, the touch of God's Holy Hand!

#### MY GOD AND I

I took a walk with God this morning while the dew lingered on the grass, the flowers, and the trees.

The beauty I beheld was breathtaking and I fell upon my

knees.

"Thank you, Lord," I cried from the depths of my soul, "thank you for this day."

And I heard the Voice of God say to me, "Show Me your

gratitude by walking in My Way!"

"O Lord," I cried, "I am so weak and unable to stand; I need the strength, the guidance of Thy Holy Hand!"

And then, with tenderness and compassion, the Lord placed His Arms around me,

And quietly said, "Come walk with Me, I will strengthen,

guide and keep thee!"

"Oh, Blessed Assurance, Jesus is mine, what a foretaste of glory divine!"

So I reached out and He took my hand— The strength came, and now I can stand

# I TALKED WITH THE LORD TODAY

I had a talk with the Lord today, And this is what He told me to say: "Be careful of the way you live, Remember you have only one life to give-One life for the Lord's work that needs to be done, One life to live, one life to give that the world might be won, Won for Jesus, the Lord and Saviour of us all-One life to give-will you stand or will you fall?" Oh, I had a talk with the Lord today, And these things He told me to say: "Dear friends, won't you give yourself to His Way? To Him who said: 'I came that you might have life. . . .' Through Him you can rid your life of all evil, turmoil and strife! The light of His love will shine through; He gave His life-will you?" Yes, I had a talk with the Lord today, And this is what He told me to say!

#### IN THE MORNING

I opened my eyes this morning as night gave way to the light of day,

And I thanked my heavenly Father for the privilege of

walking in His Way.

"Dear Father," I prayed with a heart full of love,

"Help me to live, to love, to serve, that I might have a home above!"

And I heard the still, small voice of my Lord softly say,

"My child, follow my Son, for He is the Way!

He is the life and truth, He is joy and peace, humility and goodness too,

Follow Him day by day, and in heaven there will be a

mansion for you!"

Thank you, dear Lord, for the advice You give— Day by day, my life for Jesus I will strive to live!

# **CHRISTMAS**

Christmas came to the earth with the birth of a baby boy;

This happy event brought to men's hearts a great abiding joy!

The earth expressed its joy in verse and in heartwarming

song;

The birth of this child gave the world the hope it sought so long.

Good tidings and peace came to the hearts of all men;

This babe brought to us the chance of salvation from sin.

Christmas is far more than buying and selling and gifts galore,

Christmas is peace and happiness, joy and gladness, yea, and

even more.

Christmas reminds me over and over again of what God has done for me,

How through His Son and His saving grace my sinful soul was made free—

Free from sin that besets the soul of all weak and fearful men—

And left each with a deep-abiding peace, joy and happiness within!

I am so grateful that God chose this marvelous and wonderful way

To reveal His plan for our salvation, by giving us Christmas

Day

Oh, yes, I am thankful that Christmas came to this world below,

And enabled all men the Saviour of their souls to surely know.

Yes, Christmas is a time to sing praises to our Father above, For Christmas reveals to all the world that God is love—His love revealed at Christmas through His precious Son;

His love was manifest at Christmas for everyone!

# I WENT TO CHURCH TODAY

I went to church today And bowed my head to pray; As I prayed, God spoke to me. "Dear one," He said, "let me come to thee!"

I opened my heart to Him above; Then I knew, deep within, His love; Through His love came compassion too— To Him I shall strive to be true!

His way, His truth, His life I seek, But He only comes to the lowly and meek; Only those who seek His life to daily live, Will know the purpose of Christ is to forgive!

In the quietness of the worship hour, The spirit of God comes as a mighty tower, Filling my soul with love and strength divine, Renewing my dedication, filling this heart of mine!

I went to church today And bowed my head to pray; In prayer I answered God above— I gave myself anew to His love!

#### PASSING BY

I stood by my window one Sabbath day; The scene I saw caused me to sorrowfully say, "Why, oh, why, do so many so willfully pass by The doors of God's house without even a sigh?"

As a shut-in, my heart is sad and filled with pain
For I am unable to attend, unable new strength to gain
From the blessed worship of God on His Holy Day—
As praises are sung, as anthems ring out, as they kneel to pray.

To be in God's house is a blessing heaven-sent; There a man can talk to God, and of his sins repent! But for those who ignore this blessing with head held high, There awaits a sad experience, as God passes them by.

Awake, happy to be alive on God's Holy Day, Determined to do your best in His wonderful way! Do not be counted in the number coming nigh, Going, going everywhere, but God's house passing by!

#### THE BOOK

There is a Book from which we read God's Holy Word, From which the wonderful truths of our Lord are heard; The way, the truth, the life, from its pages unfold, And we see and understand the prophecies of old.

God speaks to us of His mysteries, so wonderful and deep; He reminds us again and again His Holy commandments to keep!

He tells us to give our love to Him and to our fellow man, And to let our lives be guided day by day by the Saviour's hand!

To possess a deep knowledge of God, we must read His Book, Daily, as an integral part of our lives, in our secret nook. We must read it in the evening with our families, in sweet accord,

With the full realization that this Book is the Word of our Lord!

#### ONE LIFE TO GIVE

The only regret I have, as this life I strive to live, Is, that for my Lord, I have only one life to give. One life so tiny and small, out of the masses of the world, One life to carry the Banner of Jesus Christ unfurled. The Lord has given each of us a wonderful task to perform, But to succeed in performing this task, our hearts must be warm—

Hearts that are warm with love of the Saviour of man, Love that shines forth from a heart that is dedicated, deep within!

From hearts that are dedicated and warm comes the desire to serve

In the Kingdom's work; from the telling of the Good News we will not swerve.

But in the "fields that are white unto the harvest" we will go, That Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men, they may also know. When I see so much of the Lord's work undone,

When I see so many lost and dying souls unwon,

I cry from the depths of my soul, "Oh, Lord, for thy task, for thy cause I will live-

I am sorry, Lord, that I have only one life to give!"

#### MANKIND

A loud and lusty cry, and the doctor announced, "It's a boy!" You may be sure to his parents he brought great joy. As this baby grew and waxed strong, He was taught the difference between right and wrong. Throughout his boyhood and youthful days, This lad was guided in the Good Book ways! And then one day, after years had passed, He had grown and developed into a man at last, A man who met the trials of each day With a strength that comes to one that can pray. To each of mankind temptations come swift and fast, So it takes a faith that will enable one to stand fast. The training one receives, as he is developing into a man, Makes the difference in times of distress and enables him to stand.

# THE STAR

Long ago a star appeared in the East, Its glory startled both man and beast! It guided the Wise Men on their way To the place where the baby Jesus lay.

This star was spoken of by the prophets of old, Men are thrilled each time the story is told Of the shepherds, the Wise Men, and the angels above— The story that reveals, through Jesus, God's love!

The angels sang, the three kings bowed low, In adoration to a Saviour man could surely know In their hearts and souls, both near and far, For men are still guided to Him by a star—

A star that shines in the lives of men, Who have, by Jesus, been forgiven of sin; The star in Christmas has an important part, And I shall always hold it dear to my heart!

#### NOT ALONE

The house was quiet and still, I sat alone, The laughter, the noise, the clatter was gone; Sitting there, in the stillness all around me, I found my thoughts centering only in Thee.

I knew, with Thee, I could never be alone, Thy presence sustains each that would moan, Each that would complain and cry in distress; Thy presence brings to all Thy will to bless.

No, not alone, when the Master is so near! Yesterday, today, tomorrow, every day of the year, God is ever present to sustain and cheer. Look around, see and know His presence dear!

One may be in the lonely desert places, He may not hear laughter or see happy faces, But he may have assurance from God above That he is not alone, but dwells secure in God's love.

# THE NEW YEAR

The days have passed, another year is gone; As we look back, we see the right and the wrong. There have been disappointments, happiness and sorrow, But with heads held high we look to the morrow.

We know not what experience each day may bring, But we shall hope and pray, yea, and even sing; Fear nor distress shall dwell within our heart, Our hand will be in God's, from Him we will not part.

He will walk with us each step of the way, Through the shadows, the fears, the heartaches, dismay; When days are dark and the sun refuses to shine, The guiding spirit, the strength will come from the Divine.

The New Year with its uncertainties, its cares and woes, Will be more pleasant with our trust in Him who knows Our every need and care, our strength and weakness, too—Trust in Him, take His Hand, He'll guide you through.

#### THE SEASON OF LENT

At this time of year, we are reminded so clearly That, for our salvation, the Lord Jesus paid so dearly. He gave His life a ransom for you and for me, Our lives, more like His own, to be.

We realize, during the Season of Lent, That we must of our sins repent, For Jesus teaches by His sacrifice To live to help others is so very nice.

We are called upon, so often, to give To many causes, as this life we live; But this is a cause we all must agree That brings honor to the One who died on the tree.

During the forty days of the Lenten season, We are called upon to give for a good reason. The Church of Jesus Christ sends forth a call To men and women, boys and girls, to one and all!

#### THANKSGIVING

We give thanks unto God for the many blessings of life Without realizing the significance of freedom from strife; We enjoy good health, plenty of food, and beautiful homes too;

For the most part we take them for granted-do you?

As I think of God's blessings to me, I fall upon my knees to pray

And give thanks unto Him for every blessing in every day. Help me, Lord, to be more grateful and understanding too, Help me to know that all I am and all I have comes from you!

# WITH GOD

I stood on the threshold of a new year; There is great hope within me, but no fear; For I have placed my life in God's hand, With Him I travel throughout the land.

My faith looks to the heights I aspire, I climb onward with my heart and soul on fire— On fire for God, His salvation to bring To sinful men, let the freedom of God ring!

God frees all from the clutches of sin
If His saving grace is allowed to come in.
He makes men over into loving creatures,
With love, joy and happiness etched on their features.

All men can travel each and every year With the sustaining strength of God so near; That the darkness and uncertainty of days ahead Will be removed, with light and hope in their stead.

#### THE LORD'S WAY

I stood at the crossroads one bright and shining day; I reflected upon life as I stood gazing across the way. I saw an old man walking feebly down the road, Bent and weary, under the burden of life's heavy load.

I spoke to him in words of compassion and love; He lifted his eyes with a smile, and looked above; And said, "The days are longer, the load heavier each year. But I have never been alone, for the Lord is always near.

"He comforts, strengthens and sustains His own each day.

My son," he said, "you'll never be sorry for choosing His way."

I saw that old man, so tired and worn yet all aglow With Christ in his heart and soul, salvation to sow.

Life is hard, the way is so narrow and so long. But with Jesus, we travel with our hearts filled with song, Songs of thanksgiving and praise to Him each day! For man's soul rejoices as he travels in the Lord's way.

#### FRIENDSHIP

Have you ever been lonely, sad and forlorn, No friends, in a strange land, you're tired and worn, And then a soft voice whispers in your ear The warmth of friendship we all like to hear?

You turn to see who your kind friend might be, But not a single friendly person could you see; Yet deep within you knew you were not alone, Not as long as God reigns on His royal throne.

The knowledge of His presence is a thrilling thing; With Him in your heart you will shout and sing; Your soul will know happiness and joy until the end, For in Jesus the Christ you have an undying friend!

#### GOD'S BEAUTY

I stood on the seashore at the break of day, And each rolling wave, to me, had something to say; I was thrilled as I stood on the far-reaching strand And I realized how insignificant is every man.

The beauty of God's creation is breathtaking in scope, Far beyond anything a man can make and even beyond his hope.

But God put man in this world this beauty to behold,

And man has marveled since the days of old.

From the beautiful mountain to the shining sea, The Lord has been good to you and to me. He has placed us in a world with beauty galore— It's free for us to enjoy, to its fullest, forevermore!

## THE PSALMS

The Psalmists of old had a message to give— They told each of us the way we must live; If our lives are to be lived in sweet accord With God our Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

These men of old had such a deep and rich insight Into the ways of God that teaches us the right! The right from the wrong, we all should know, If in the way of God, our Lord, we would go!

They told their message in verse and in song, In a vivid way they spoke out against the wrong; Their messages were upbraiding and inspirational, too, And I love the Book of Psalms and its messages so true.

True to life today, although they have been written many years,

They are so comforting, they strengthen and relieve our fears—

Fears of life, of sickness and of death, yea, and even of failure, too!

Read them, love them, and you will find them helpful to you!

# **OUR MOTHERS**

Many tributes have been made to people in high and low places.

And there is one whom the world in its love embraces;

With all the compassion and devotion and understanding at our command,

The sun shines, the day is fair, and happiness abounds as we clasp our mother's hand!

Our mothers' love is unselfish, pure, warm, and good,

Even as she washes our clothes, cleans our house, and cooks our food.

In moments of anxiety, when happiness turns into anguish and sadness,

Tears are wiped away, the dark clouds vanish, and life again is happiness!

A mother's day is filled with toil and strain as her family she : keeps,

But her smile is present as she consoles and soothes the one

that weeps.

When one comes with some darksome and dreadful experience of fear,

It is so comforting to have our mothers' sustaining love so dear.

If tragedy strikes and a loved one is laid beneath the sod, We realize that mothers' love is second only to that of God. As we struggle, day by day, to be worthy of eternal life

above,

We thank Thee, dear Lord, for our mothers and their undying love!

#### GOD'S CARE

I have seen those who walk under the shadow of sorrow, I have watched as they look with hope to tomorrow; I have known those whose bodies were racked with pain Turn to the Great Healer of all people again and again.

I have learned from those I have watched, day by day, That sorrow and pain tend to bind us closer to His Way; For God did not promise freedom from sorrow and pain, But in time of trouble we find our faith is not in vain.

God's love and compassion for all those who serve Him Is not some fantasy of the mind nor an idle whim; But God's people are forever fully aware That they are constantly under His loving care.

God gives us the strength we need each and every day, He guides us over the obstacles and trials along life's way. He comforts and sustains through the darkest night, And leads us into a life that is good and right.

## **EASTER**

Easter is the season of great rejoicing; Men and women everywhere are still voicing The happiness of Mary Magdalene so fair, Who went to the tomb and found not the Lord there.

The miracle of the resurrection was evident By the message of the angel, heaven-sent, For Jesus had arisen from the darkness of death— "The Saviour is alive!" they said, with bated breath.

Alive to thrill the hearts of all men Who hear the message of Christ within; His love penetrates the heart and the soul, This man of Galilee, resurrected so long ago.

The joy of Mary and the others that day Has spread across the centuries, and men say: "To one and all, His love is still so great, Let Him into your heart before it's too late!

"Let Easter fill your life and make you free, He'll come into your life, and you will see The wonder and mystery of the resurrection, And Easter will set your life in a new direction."

## OUR PRAYER LIFE

Many things happen to each of us along this journey of life, And when trouble comes we turn to God and pray.

For we know He will answer and take away all turmoil and

strife,

But we should not wait until trouble comes but, without ceasing, pray.

When all goes well and there is happiness and peace, We should spend much time in prayer and meditation, And the Lord will answer our prayers His blessings will never cease, For He loves us and gives us so much without hesitation!

We are so weak and often yield and commit a sin.
But God does not condemn us—no, He always forgives;
So we should strive to keep in tune and not wear His patience thin;

With our hearts given completely to Him, His Holy Spirit within always lives!

# THE JOY OF GIVING

God created the world and all therein and said: "It is good." He made man, the birds, the animals, the grass, the flowers, and the wood.

All that He made He gave to man to use and to enjoy. But man must all his abilities, his talents and his intelligence

employ.

God was pleased in the results of His handiwork of creation, And He expects man to be filled with joy and elation As he responds to the gifts from God he receives; Man's joy is expressed by giving to the one in whom he believes.

'Tis a blessed thing to give to the cause of our God in heaven above,

That the hungry may be fed, the naked clothed with a gift of love.

God smiles upon a cheerful giver among the race of men; When we give to the work of the Lord, we help in the fight against sin!

"Take my gospel to the four corners of the world," was Christ's command;

It must be preached here, around the world, in every land; Your gift and mine will help His command to be done, And many lost and hungry souls to Him will be won.

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## MOTHER'S DAY

This day has been dedicated to all mothers— And rightly so, as she gives herself for others. She is ever ready, with her unselfish love, To help others to know our Father above.

She toils day in and day out to make life worth living; Her life is one of unselfish, dedicated and devoted self-giving; Let us honor motherhood every day of every year; Let her know of your love and devotion, your mother dear!

Bring her your gifts on this very special day; However great or however small, let your gift say: "I love you, Mother, for your love and tender care; My love for you I proclaim, here, there, and everywhere!"

## HIS PEACE WITHIN

I sought a secret place one day, Because I needed to kneel and pray; My soul was wrought with pain, I felt my strength begin to wane.

But there, in secret, I began to cry, "Lord, O Lord, help me, please stand by; I am weak, I am tired and worn, I need Thee now more than the day I was born."

A Peace began to flood my soul, A joy, a happiness, over my being began to roll, And I knew His presence within my life, I was free of pain and weakness, of sin and strife!

Thank you, Lord, for hearing my plea, Thank you, Lord, for rescuing me! I cannot but help give you my all, my love, And anxiously await the reunion above!

## I SAW MOTHER LAST NIGHT

I had a dream about my mother last night; I saw her dark brown hair, and it shone in the light; Her smile was so sweet, her voice so soft and kind, My heart leaped within me as I saw her in my mind.

The vision of Mother brought back memories of old: I remember her as she made me laugh at some story she told. I also remember the soft and gentle touch of her hand As she comforted a hurt and frightened little man.

The way she knew how to speak, to laugh and sing, Was enough to make any boy's heartstrings ring; This was my mother's way of showing her love—A love akin to that of our God in heaven above.

I had a dream about my mother last night; It was wonderful to see her, in a moment so bright; I love my mother, the memory of her is so sweet, I want to so live that in heaven we will meet!

## SONG OF THE HEART

In the darkness of the night I traveled on, Searching for I knew not what, and quite alone; Then I heard, wafting on the cold, damp air, Music coming from I knew not where.

I felt compelled to search for the place Whence the music came, to see the face Of one who could sing and thrill me so— Such a person I felt compelled to know.

I searched and searched, the sound was clear, But I could not find it, yet it was so near; Then I began to realize from whence it came— 'Twas my heart that was singing—Oh, bless His Name!

No matter how dark the night or blue the day, One's soul will sing, along Jesus' blessed Way, Songs of gladness, praise and of devoted Love As one travels through life on the journey above.

## SALVATION

There is a longing deep within a man's soul For that which was spoken of by the prophets of old, When God's great plan was made known to the world, His truth, His love, to mankind unfurled.

Through His only begotten Son came a great revelation, For through Him the world learned of salvation—Salvation that saves a man's soul from sin, And enables him to know the peace of God within!

The peace that satisfies the deep longing of man Will come to each and all who takes His hand—And man will know the way, the truth, the life! Darkness will become light, peace will replace strife!

Oh, come and hear the message of the prophets of old, Let Christ come into your life and save your soul! And you will hear the voice of the Lord say, "The power of the Holy Spirit will guide you in the way!"

## GOD'S MINISTERS

When I was a little boy, I stood in awe of the "preacher" Even more, I think, than I did that first-grade teacher. But as I have matured and grown into a man, With my mind and with my heart I now understand That these men, called and ordained by our Father on high, Give unselfishly of themselves when troubles and sorrows are nigh;

They visit, they preach and teach, they pray and meditate From early in the morning until the evening hour is late.

Oh, yes, these men of God I have come to love and understand,

For I know that each one must be a dedicated man—A man who works and strives to lead us to a home above, A man who gives so much, yet asks so little—only for our love.

May God bless and use these men for Christ our Lord, And then, when their work on earth is o'er, may each receive a rich reward!

## THE NAIL-SCARRED HAND

A coronary thrombosis, the doctor said;
Not once, but twice, the nurses thought I was dead;
Through it all, as I hovered on the brink of life and death,
They administered oxygen to help me get my breath.
But my mind was not on earthly things,
I was feasting my eyes on a beauty fit for kings.
My eyes beheld the glory of heavenly places

The inhabitants there had happiness and joy and peace on their faces.

One of the strangest things of this experience for me— I was searching for the Christ who was once nailed to a tree! None of the earthly goods we value so highly entered the plan,

But I found myself reaching for the Nail-Scarred Hand— The Nail-Scarred Hand of Jesus, the Saviour of us all— For I knew, whether in life or death, With my hand in His I could not fall!

## TO MY WIFE AT CHRISTMAS

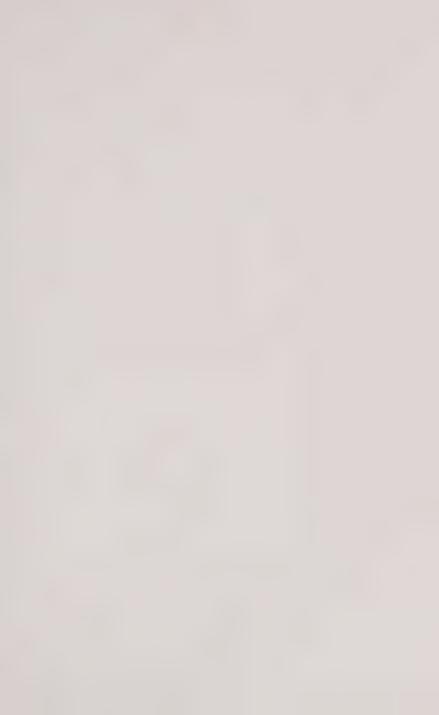
This Christmas gift to you I give, For to make you happy is my reason to live; My love for you has grown so dear With the constant passing of each year.

I have watched you, as time passed by, Move so quickly and softly at our baby's cry, I have known the tender touch of your hand, When I, your husband, have been unable to stand.

Our family, our home, have been a haven of rest, You and me, our daughters and son, God has blessed; At this Christmas season, may we look above, And share with each other and with God our love!

This tribute to you, my dear wife, I pay, As you accept this gift on Christmas Day; I love you more each passing moment, And I know, to me, you were heaven sent!









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(Continued from front flap)

The Christian seeking food for spiritual thought will find it here in lines exemplified by this passage from "My God and I":

I took a walk with God this morning while the dew lingered on the grass, the flowers, and the trees.

The beauty I felt was breathtaking, and I fell upon my knees.

"Thank you, Lord," I cried from the depths of my soul, "thank you for this day."

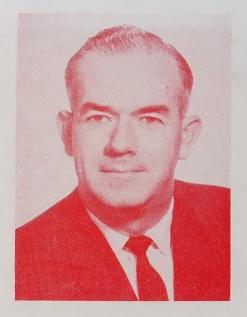
And I heard the Voice of God say to me,

"Show me your gratitude by walking in My Way!"

Published by Vantage Press, Inc. 120 West 31st Street, New York 1, N. Y.

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About the Author

Born in Gulf, North Carolina, W. A. Seawell, whose parents died before he was fourteen, lived in many places before he settled in Alamance County where, after Army service, 1942-45, he went into business. He established a grocery-store-service-station combination which he operated until he received a call to the ministry. At that time he entered college, took his A.B. degree at Elon College and further training at Duke Divinity School, in Durham. He has been a Methodist pastor for fourteen years, serving several North Carolina churches, and is presently serving Carr Methodist Church in Durham. THE HAND OF GOD, AND OTHER POEMS, is his first published volume of verse.



